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ABSTRACT

The current status of the program for the reform of higher education in Sweden (enacted in 1977) is reported. Principles of the program, which is designed to monitor program implementation and collect information concerning the reform, are outlined. Among the principles identified are that the evaluation was designed to pinpoint problem areas and initiate projects within those areas in a series of steps that allow for change along the way. Other principles follow from the pattern and involve the combining of information from the various areas and the development of the ability for the colleges and universities to make their own evaluations. Five areas are identified as needing reform: the organization of higher education, funding systems and the planning of programs, activity evaluation in higher education, forms and content of higher education, and social effects of the reform of higher education. Each of the ten projects listed is described briefly--functional study of the organization of higher education, funding systems and the planning of programs, activity evaluation in higher education, problem and project oriented education, the study organization project, the adjustment of the higher education system to recurrent education, the Uppsala recurrent education project, effects of access rules, equality and higher education and recruitment for research training and research careers. Information on seven bulletins on the reform follow-up program which are available from the Swedish Board is listed, as well as titles available in Swedish only. (PHR)

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INFORMATION ON RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

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1979:7

THE UHÄ PROGRAMME FOR THE FOLLOW-UP OF THE REFORM OF HIGHER EDUCATION

CURRENT STATUS

BACKGROUND

The National Board of Universities and Colleges (NBUC; in Swedish UHÄ) has a programme for the follow-up of the 1977 reform of higher education in Sweden. This programme has earlier been described in R & D for Higher Education 1977:1 and 1978:3.

The commission by the Swedish government to UHÄ is to follow the reform implementation and collect the information that will make it possible to take necessary steps or make suitable changes if parts of the reform do not have the intended effects or if the higher education system does not function well in certain respects.

For many reasons many comparable evaluation programmes have failed to have any noticeable impact. This programme has been designed with the intention to avoid or overcome some of the obstacles that could be foreseen when undertaking a system evaluation task of this kind. Some of the characteristics of the programme will be mentioned here.

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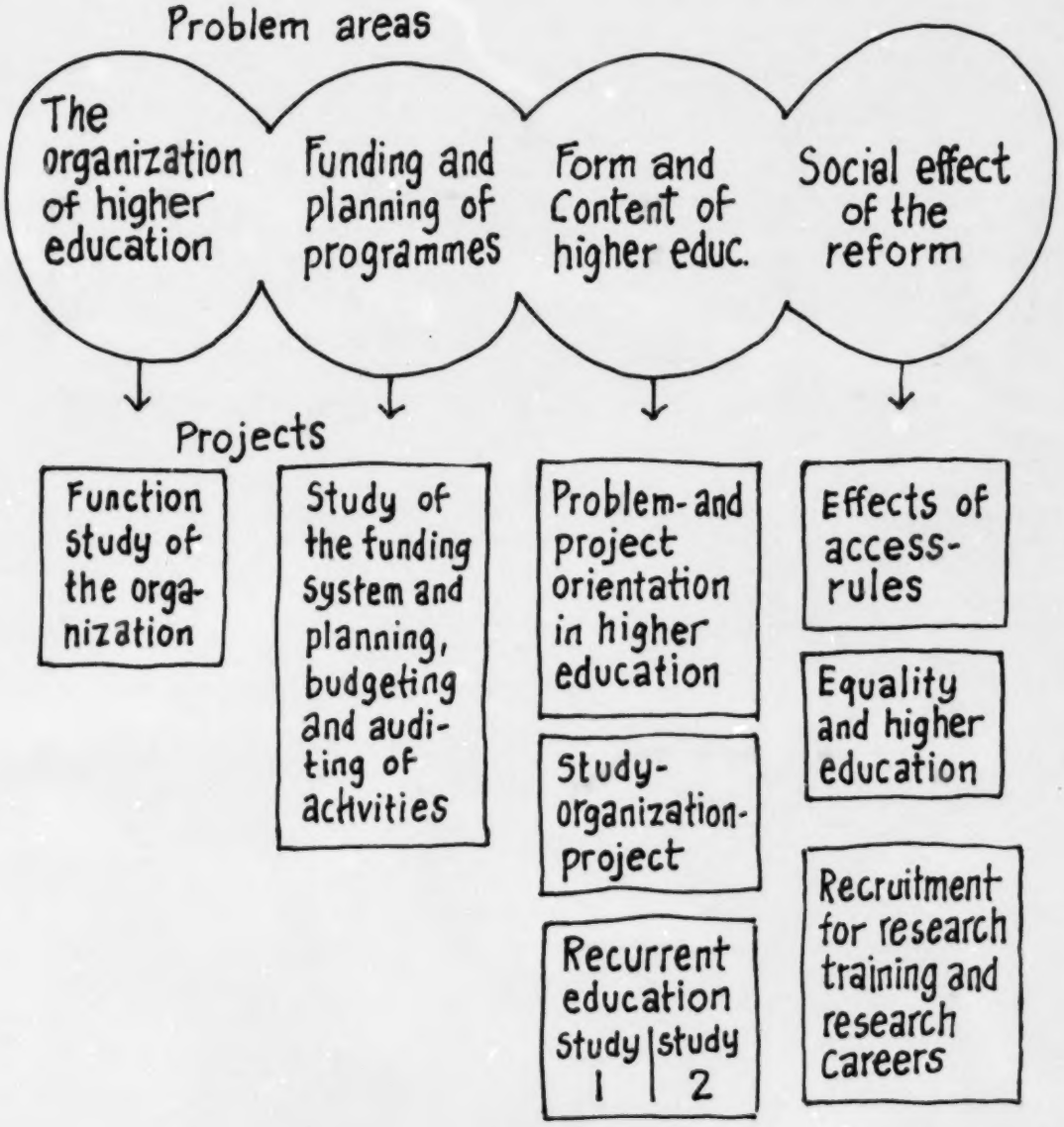
1 The first principle for the design of the programme was not to make one comprehensive evaluation project covering the whole reform. Instead a small number of essential problem areas were selected, and within each one of these areas one or more projects have been initiated (see page 3) and more will follow. For each project an independent project leader is responsible, but he/she is also expected to keep in contact with the other projects. The project leaders are also members of a consultative group for the whole programme.

One advantage of this design is that you will get many researchers from several disciplines to illuminate the problems independently from various angles. Right now there are representatives from economics, political science, sociology, pedagogics, psychology, statistics and administration active within the programme.

2 Another principle, related to the first one, is that the evaluation is carried out stepwise. In the first phase of the programme most projects are concerned with the preconditions for a development according to the reform, e g investigating the functioning of the new organization and finding out what types of disturbances and malfunctions occur, or studying how the new funding and budget system affects the programme planning or whether the new system of study programmes and separate courses is well attuned to societal and individual demands.

The advantage of this strategy is that flaws or misconstructions in the "machinery" can be detected and repaired early and without awaiting possible long-term effects. It can also lead to a better understanding of reasons for an unexpected or unachieved development. Plans for the following-up of long-term effects will be developed in the next phase of the programme.

Follow-up programme of Swedish reform of higher education


Problem areas
The organization of higher education
Funding and planning of programmes
Form and Content of higher educ.
Social effect of the reform
Projects
Function study of the organization
Study of the funding system and planning, budgeting and auditing of activities
Problem- and project orientation in higher education
Study-organization-project
Recurrent education
Study 1
Study 2
Effects of access-rules
Equality and higher education
Recruitment for research training and research careers

Activity evaluation project
Self evaluation pilot studies
Case studies of mixes of reform-effects

3 The reporting from the projects is also done stepwise. The results will then usually be summarized in a final report from each project. One purpose of this continuous reporting is that comments and reactions can be fed back into the project and utilized in the proceeding work; another purpose is its stimulating effects. Although this programme is a commission by the government, the target groups for the use of the results are much wider. The reform is so complex that a central follow-up programme must necessarily be complemented by evaluations at local and regional levels as well. Furthermore, with the increased decentralization of decisions it is also obvious that most changes and adjustments may and should be made by and within the universities and colleges themselves.

To stimulate such steps and measures some of the projects have been carried out in co-operation with teachers, students and local administrators. An example is the project concerning problem orientation and project organization in which the project leader worked in a seminar-group together with teachers and researchers from various disciplines at several universities and colleges. The participants in their turn often initiated local groups for exchange of experience. Part of the reporting from this project will also be done jointly by the project leader and some of the participants.

4 The choice of a design with several independent projects and stepwise investigations and reporting makes it necessary to devote much effort to tying together results and observations from different combinations of projects and also with relevant knowledge outside the programme. Analyses along several dimensions and by different persons will be needed. With a complex evaluation object like this one, this phase of the work is arduous but also especially important, if there is not to be a gap between the evaluation results and the intended users.

5 An important component in our programme is the specific project that is termed "activity evaluation" (see page 3). The primary purpose of this project is to stimulate and support the development of self-evaluation methods and routines as instruments in the continuous, internal reformation going on within universities and colleges. During the first years regional courses have been held for participants from all universities and colleges. In the present phase pilot projects are about to be started together with some universities and colleges. The intention is, of course, for the experience from these projects to be shared with and adapted to other units within the higher education system. If a department, or a section, or a whole college or university engaged in attempts to survey, test and evaluate their total activities, this

would give excellent opportunities to study the reform measures and their interaction effects in different natural settings as a series of case studies. That would increase our insight into what is going on and why, and it would constitute a valuable complement to the separate studies and the tying together of results from various projects.

SCOPE AND POSITION OF THE PROGRAMME

The UHÄ programme for the follow-up of the reform now comprises ten projects within the five problem sectors to which priority has been given: the organization of higher education, funding systems and the planning of programmes, activity evaluation in higher education, forms and content of higher education, and social effects of the reform of higher education. A general sketch of the projects in the programme is to be found on page 3. Brief descriptions will now be given of the present state of the various projects, several of which have been described at greater length in Research and Development for Higher Education (see appendix 1).

1 Functional study of the organization of higher education

Project leader

Rolf Lundin, Department of Business Economics, University of Umeå

Associates

Per Månsson, Department of Business Economics, University of Umeå, Kaj Sköldberg, Department of Political Science, University of Stockholm, Staffan Gran and Lars Jansson, Department of Business Economics, University of Gothenburg, Rune Dahlgren, Department of Sociology, University of Lund.

Following an initial wide inventory of problems within the units and regions where the persons taking part in the project are stationed, a two-year project plan was adopted for the previous and current fiscal years. This plan provides for the conduct of a number of sub-studies centering mainly on the division into higher education units, the role of the new regional boards, and the practical interaction occurring within and between governing boards of the higher education units, study programme committees and departments. These studies are being carried out in the Lund/Malmö, Gothenburg, Stockholm and Umeå higher education regions and are being systematically co-ordinated in order to facilitate comparisons. Particular issues to be dealt with include, for example, the role of the external representatives and their experience of work within the higher education bodies concerned, and secondly the question of whether the reform has led to an increase of bureaucratic tendencies in higher education.

The first report on the project, dealing with the regional level, appeared last spring (UHÄ-rapport 1979:6). The next reports to appear will deal with study programme committees and the role of the external representatives.

2 Funding systems and the planning of programmes

Project leader

Hans Malmquist, Department of Business Economics, University of Gothenburg

A pilot study has been carried out with the aim of charting the planning and budgeting systems and the accounting and follow-up systems of a number of universities and colleges, viz the universities of Gothenburg and Umeå, the Institute of Technology in Stockholm, and the College of Sundsvall/Härnösand. Problems are now being analysed in the light of this exploration. This analysis will in turn provide a foundation for further investigations and/or practical proposals.

3 Activity evaluation in higher education

Project leader

Ann-Marie Furumark, UHÄ

This project is intended to contribute towards the development of activity evaluation as an instrument of critical analysis and internal activity evaluation in all units and other higher education bodies. The first stage of the project has been mainly devoted to the collection of knowledge and experience concerning methods and to the arrangement of courses and conferences designed to publicize this fund of knowledge and experience and to encourage independent activity evaluation. Four-day courses have been held in all six higher education regions, with participants representing all levels from departments to regional offices and the UHÄ itself.

Experience, suggestions and ideas concerning activity evaluation have been collected from persons taking part in the courses, the intention being to support local initiatives for the development of activity evaluation by various means at the present stage of the project and to disseminate knowledge on the subject, thereby stimulating efforts in new places. Among other things it is planned to compile a debate publication containing both theoretical contributions and practical examples from various quarters.

4 Problem- and project-oriented education

Project leader

Kjell Askeland, Lillehammer

This project has now been completed except for work on the final report. Plans have been made for a series of publications. The first publication will contain a historical retrospect of the international development of project orientation, together with an analysis of the terms on which project-oriented teaching can be capable of providing a constructive alternative to conventional teaching in higher eduation. Various specific problems, e g problem-oriented studies in various subject fields such as medicine, physics and social work, the theory of project orientation and the evaluation of project studies, will then be dealt with in a number of subsequent reports.

5 The study organization project

Project leader

Vacant

This project is now at the planning stage. At both local and central levels, many efforts to follow up and study separate courses, study programmes or sectors are being done. The purpose of this project will be to carry out a survey of the overall organization of studies and, primarily, to investigate problems of a general nature. The organization of study programmes and courses will be considered in terms of its efficiency as a planning instrument and also in relation to the needs of students and working life.

6 The adjustment of the higher education system to recurrent education

Project leader

Kjell Rubenson, Teachers' Training College in Stockholm

Associate

Owe Nilsson, Teachers' Training College in Stockholm

An analysis of the feasibility of recurrent education at post-secondary level has been carried out and reported (UHÄ-rapport 1979:1). Among other things this analysis has revealed factors within and outside the education system which either impede or further the development of recurrent education. A field study is now being made of the adjustment of the higher education system to recurrent education at local, regional and central levels. The range of courses and their

construction are being investigated, together with a number of study programmes in each educational sector. Problems connected with recurrent education are being discussed, for example, in the light of specific vocational functions, with reference to subject structures and inter-subject relations, and also with reference to education as an integral process.

7 The Uppsala recurrent education project

Project leader

Urban Dahllöf, Department of Education, University of Uppsala

Associates

Ola Westin and Birgitta Willén, Department of Education, University of Uppsala

This project involves a study of recurrent education in terms of the motives and circumstances of the students. Study behaviour is being viewed in relation to various frame factors in the student situation, and an analysis is being made of the implications which this holds for educational planning.

Work is continuing on special analyses, with reference to recurrent education, of data collected in the course of previous studies and on the development of the theoretical base for this problem sector.

8 Effects of access rules

Project leader

Lillemor Kim, UHÄ

The third report from this project (UHÄ-rapport 1979:13) contains a summary and analysis of two years' experience of the rules of admission to higher education and a critical review of the premises and aims of the access reform. This report represents a final account of the initial phase of the project. In the light of the results and problems thus presented, investigations will be made to focus on questions judged to be of particular interest.

9 Equality and higher education

Project leader

Allan Svensson, Department of Education, University of Gothenburg

The purpose of this project is to analyse and elucidate trends in selection for higher education. A first report (UHÄ-rapport 1979:9) contains

a many-sided analysis of the "Individual Statistics Project" concerning enrolments for courses of post-secondary education in the periods between 1966-1971 and 1971-1976, i e tendencies before the reform of higher education. This report can therefore provide a starting point for the follow-up and analysis of trends following the implementation of the reform. A plan showing how this type of follow-up could be arranged has been put forward.

10 Recruitment for research training and research careers

Project leader

Bo Ekehammar, Department of Psychology, University of Stockholm

In this project, UHÄ is collaborating with the Swedish Council for Planning and Co-ordination of Research in a study of the recruitment and training of researchers.

The project is planned to comprise analyses of existing statistical data concerning the number and distribution of trained researchers, persons undergoing research training and new recruitment and recruitment bases within different faculties and disciplines, and also independent empirical studies of attitudes towards science and research among upper secondary school and post-secondary students. UHÄ has stressed that the investigation must provide a serviceable basis for the elucidation of matters concerning equal opportunities for men and women.

Marianne Bauer

1979-09-03

INFORMATION BULLETINS ON THE REFORM FOLLOW-UP PROGRAMME

UHÄ:s program för uppföljning av högskolereformen, FoU för högskolan, 1977:1.

The UHÄ programme for the follow-up of the reform of higher education (including descriptions of the project on activity evaluation in higher education and the project on problem- and project-oriented education), R&D for Higher Education, 1977:1.

Högskolans anpassning till återkommande utbildning, FoU för högskolan, 1977:10 (Rubenson - Nilsson).

The adaption of universities and colleges to recurrent education, R&D for Higher Education, 1977:13 (Rubenson - Nilsson).

Uppsala-projektet om återkommande utbildning, FoU för högskolan, 1977:11 (Dahllöf).

The Uppsala project on recurrent education, R&D for Higher Education, 1977:15 (Dahllöf).

Uppföljning av de nya tillträdesreglerna till högskoleutbildning, FoU för högskolan, 1977:12 (Kim).

Follow-up of the new rules of admission for higher education (the Admissions Project), R&D for Higher Education, 1977:14 (Kim).

Verksamhetsvärdering i högskolan, FoU för högskolan, 1978:2 (Östergren).

Activity evaluation in higher education, R&D for Higher Education, 1978:2 (Östergren).

Lägesrapport från UHÄ:s program för uppföljning av högskolereformen, FoU för högskolan, 1978:4 (Bauer).

The UHÄ programme for the follow-up of the reform of higher education - current status, R&D for Higher Education, 1978:3 (Bauer).

Uppföljning av högskolereformen i fråga om institutionell organisation, FoU för högskolan 1979:1 (Dahlgren-Lundin).

Follow-up of the reform of higher education with reference to institutional organization, R&D for Higher Education, 1979:1 (Dahlgren-Lundin).

REPORTS ON THE REFORM FOLLOW-UP PROGRAMME (In Swedish only)

Kim, L
Simon, D
Tillträde till högskolan. Urvalsreglernas effekter på rekryteringen till spärrad högskoleutbildning hösten 1977.
(Access to higher education. The effect of the rules of selection on recruitment for restricted intake to higher education in the autumn term 1977.)
UHÄ-rapport 1978:6

Kim, L
Tillträde till högskolan. Försöksverksamhet med vidgat tillträde (25:5-regeln) 1969-1976.
(Access to higher education. Experimental wider admissions (the 25:5 rule) 1969-1976.)
UHÄ-rapport 1978:18

Bladh, A
UHÄ:s planeringsberedningar - en funktionsstudie.
(The planning committees of the National Board of Universities and Colleges - a functional study.)
UHÄ-rapport 1978:19

Rubenson, K
Högskolans anpassning till återkommande utbildning - förutsättningar inom och utom systemet.
(The adjustment of higher education to recurrent education - preconditions within the system and outside it.)
UHÄ-rapport 1979:1

Månsson, P
Sköldberg, K
Vision och verklighet - regionnivån i den nya högskolan.
(Vision and reality - regional level in the new system of higher education.)
UHÄ-rapport 1979:6

Svensson, A
Jämlikhet på gång? Den sociala selektionen till universitet och högskolor under 60- och 70-talen.
(Equality in progress? Social selection at universities and colleges during the sixties and seventies.)
UHÄ-rapport 1979:9

Kim, L
Två års erfarenheter av de nya tillträdesreglerna till högskoleutbildning. Tillträde till högskolan: Tredje delrapporten.
(Two years' experience of the new rules concerning access to higher education. Access to higher education: Third interim report.)
UHÄ-rapport 1979:13